DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 246 174 UD 023 706

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TITLE	Project Parents: Awareness, Education, and Involvement. O.E.E. Evaluation Report, 1982-1983.
INSTITUTION	New York City Board of Education, Brooklyn, N.Y. Office of Educational Evaluation.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	May 84
GRANT	G00-800-7040
NOTE	57p.; For related documents, see ED 215 070 and ED 231 919; Prepared by the O.E.E. Bilingual Education Evaluation Unit.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Achievement Gains; Elementary Education; *English (Second Language); *High School Equivalency Programs; *Limited English Speaking; Mathematics Achievement; *Parent Participation; Parent School Relationship; *Program Effectiveness; Program Evaluation; Reading Achievement; Spanish Speaking; Staff Development
IDENTIFIERS	*New York (New York)

ABSTRACT

Project Parents was a three-year program designed to increase parental participation in the educational process. Originally implemented in two community school districts at four school sites, the project focused on parents of Spanish-, French/Creole-, Greek -and Italian-speaking primary level students with limited English language skills. Parents participated in classes in ESL and in high school equivalency test preparation. In addition, program staff offered workshops designed to increase parent understanding of New York City school system operations and role-playing workshops designed to increase parents' self-confidence in being advocates for their children. Also taking place as part of Project Parents was the ongoing evaluation and acquisition of curriculum materials, the development of materials for those language groups for which commercial items were scarce, and staff development activities. Participating parents were assessed in high school equivalency and attendance. Their children were assessed in English and Spanish language ability, English reading, and mathematics. Quantitative analysis of parent and student achievement indicated that (1) gains made by program students in listening/speaking and reading/writing were statistically significant; (2) in Spanish, students demonstrated no significant change in listening/speaking (due to high pre-test performance), but improved their reading/writing test scores; (3) moderate to large gains were made on the California Achievement Test; (4) third graders made large gains in mathematics; and (5) 19 participating parents passed the General Equivalency Diploma examination. (Author/GC)

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PROJECT PARENTS

AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND INVOLVEMENT

1982-1983

OEE Evaluation Report

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UD023706

O.E.E. Evaluation Report

May, 1984

Grant Number: G00-800-7040

PROJECT PARENTS

AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND INVOLVEMENT

1982-1983

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UD023706

A SUMMARY OF THE EVALUATION

FOR PROJECT PARENTS

1982-1983

Project Parents was a three-year program designed to increase parental participation in the educational process. Originally implemented in two community school districts at four school sites, the project focused on parents of Spanish-, French/Creole-, Greek- and Italian-speaking students with limited English language skills in kindergarten through grade three. Parents participated in classes in English as a second language and in high school equivalency test preparation. In addition, program staff offered workshops designed to increase parent understanding of New York City school system operations and role-playing workshops designed to increase parents' self-confidence in being advocates for their children.

Title VII funded the positions of the program director, assistant director, two resource teachers, three paraprofessionals, and a bilingual secretary. Staff evaluated and acquired commercially-prepared materials for program use in addition to translating and developing materials for the smaller language groups represented for which commercial items were scarce. Staff development activities included participation in staff and school meetings, conferences, workshops, and attendance at university courses.

Participating parents were assessed in high school equivalency (G.E.D. examination) and attendance (program records). Their children were assessed in English and Spanish language ability (Language Assessment Battery [LAB], English and Spanish versions); English reading (California Achievement Test [CAT]); and mathematics (Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test [S.M.D.T.]). Quantitative analysis of parent and student achievement indicates that:

-- The average raw score gains made by program students on the listening/speaking and reading/writing subtests of the Language Assessment Battery were statistically significant and of large effect size.

-- On the Spanish LAB, students demonstrated no significant change in listening/speaking scores due to their high pre-test performance. However, the reading/writing raw scores had a statistically significant increase with a large effect size.

-- Fourth-grade students made significantly large gains on the CAT; the gains of third grade students were moderate.

-- Third-grade students made significantly large gains on the S.D.M.T.; fourth graders did not demonstrate growth since their pre-test scores were at the national mean.

-- Nineteen participating parents passed the General Equivalency Diploma examination.

The following recommendations are aimed at improving the overall effectiveness of future programs serving similar populations:

-- Developing formal criteria in selecting sites for parent education programs, such as the availability of adequate space;

-- Developing strategies to involve school administrators, classroom personnel, and others to integrate the program into existing structures;

-- Stating program objectives which are both measurable and can be readily implemented with available resources;

-- Making special efforts to recruit parents of students in greatest need as program participants;

-- Completing curriculum should be considered as a pre-program activity;

-- Arranging sessions between parents and their children's teachers to discuss each semester's coursework;

-- Taping workshops so that absentees can review material at their convenience;

-- Maintaining complete and timely records of all required evaluation data.

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PROJECT PARENTS: AWARENESS, EDUCATION, AND INVOLVEMENT

New York City Public Schools
Office of Bilingual Education

Central Office:	Center for Staff Development Supportive and Instructional Services 131 Livingston Street Brooklyn, New York 11202
Center Director:	Angela Rosario Bazley
Project Director:	Clara Lluberes Ostrowski
Participating Districts:	District 1 (Manhattan) District 24 (Queens)
Number of Sites:	Three (P.S. 188M, 140M, 14Q)
Target Languages:	Spanish, French/Creole, Greek, Italian
Target Population:	150
Year of Funding:	1982-1983, Third of a three-year cycle

I. OVERVIEW

Project Parents was developed as a multi-site program of education and involvement for New York City public school parents of students with limited English language skills. Based on the premise that when parents are involved in their children's education, there is an increase in student achievement, the program attempted to build reinforcement of education in the home and to encourage the target population to participate more fully in their children's schooling.

The three-year project, under the direction of the Center for Staff Development, Supportive, and Instructional Services of the New York City Office of Bilingual Education, was originally implemented in two community

school districts (C.S.D.) at four school sites. Program parents participated in classes in English as a second language (E.S.L.) and in high school equivalency test preparation (G.E.D.) classes. In addition, the project offered special workshops designed not only to increase parental understanding of New York City school system operations, but also to increase parents' self-conference in being advocates for their children.

II. CONTEXT

PARTICIPATING SITES

Project Parents was centrally located at the Office of Bilingual Education of the New York City Public Schools. From this office, a city-wide request for participation was issued to the school districts. The criteria for project participation included a high enrollment of students with limited English proficiency (LEP) and a limited amount of Title VII services within the district. Four community school districts were selected: C.S.D. 1 and 3 in Manhattan; C.S.D. 13 in Brooklyn; and C.S.D. 24 in Queens. These districts, in turn, designated appropriate school sites based on their linguistic populations. In the first year of program operation only C.S.D. 1 and 24 were able to begin project activities. Subsequently, it was decided that funding be continued only at those sites that had begun operations.

Community School District 1

C.S.D. 1 is on the lower east side of Manhattan, a low-income area. The school district is 75 percent Hispanic and has had the lowest reading achievement scores in the city. P.S. 188 and P.S. 142 were designated as the two participating school sites in this district.

P.S. 188, an old building surrounded by housing projects, was able to provide a spacious ground floor room for the project. P.S. 142, a new building surrounded by old tenements, lacked the necessary space and school support for program activities. Consequently, the project was relocated across the street at P.S. 140. The principal there provided a special room for the project, and with the school's support,

it flourished in its final year of operation.

Community School District 24

C.S.D. 24 serves the Elmhurst and Corona sections of Queens. Since 1970, C.S.D. 24 has experienced the largest growth in student population of any school district within the city. In addition, there has been a recent influx of Spanish-speaking students from Central and South America and the district's Hispanic population has increased to 38 percent. The neighborhoods within the district consist of working, lower-middle income families. Compared with District 1, far fewer of the LEP students were from low income, single-parent, or public assistance families.

Initially P.S. 19 and P.S. 199 were designated as program sites, but due to overcrowded conditions, could not allocate space to the program. P.S. 14 and P.S. 143 were chosen as replacements. P.S. 14, surrounded by two-family homes and garden apartments, was able to provide space throughout the entire project. However, P.S. 143, also in a residential neighborhood, was unable to meet the project's growing space requirements and at the end of the second funding year, program activities were suspended. District 24, therefore, had only one site participating in the last project year.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

Parent participation in the program was voluntary, but to ensure continuity over the three-year span, parents of LEP children in kindergarten through third grade were preferred. It was also assumed that younger students were more likely to have at least one non-working parent who could participate. Parents who wanted to increase their

involvement in their children's education, to increase their English language ability, and/or to prepare for the high school equivalency examination participated in the program. In the 1982-83 school year, 145 parents participated in the program.

Almost all of the parents were immigrants. Twenty-four percent had been in New York City for less than five years. Approximately 40 percent had lived in the city from six to twelve years. Table 1 presents the country of birth and the native languages spoken by the project participants. Educational background and skills levels varied among parent participants. Fifty-six percent had attended school for only eight years or less. Only thirteen percent were high school graduates. All, however, had English language skills deficiencies. All but ten were female. The younger parents had ambivalent feelings toward school, while the older parents felt respectful. All parent participants wanted to play a more active role in their children's education. And, as could be expected, family problems and financial pressures caused attendance to vary. Yet, the program was able to accommodate the variety of life situations represented by its participants.

Of the 126 parents who reported information on their children, 71 had one, 46 had two, and 9 had three children enrolled in the three participating schools. Tables 2 and 3 present information provided by the project office on the students participating in the program.

TABLE 1

Number and Percent of Parents by Native

Language and Country of Birth

Native Language	Country of Birth	Number	Percent
Spanish	Puerto Rico	49	35
	Dominican Republic	37	26
	Colombia	20	14
	Ecuador	6	4
	Central and South America (country unspecified)	19	14
Italian	Italy	2	1
Greek	Greece	1	1
Cantonese	Taiwan	2	1
Other	Other	4	3
	TOTAL	140	100

TABLE 2

Number of Students by Country of Birth[a]

Country of Birth	Number
Puerto Rico	1
Dominican Republic	2
Guatemala	2
El Salvador	3
Colombia	3
Ecuador	3
Peru	2
Bolivia	1
Argentina	4
Taiwan	1
United States	51
TOTAL	73

[a]Information was missing for 93 students.

TABLE 3

Number and Percent of Project Students by Grade

Grade	Number	Percent
K	27	17
1	31	19
2	23	14
3	25	16
4	26	16
5	20	13
6	8	5
TOTAL	160	100

III. PROGRAM DECRIPTION

OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of Project Parents was to increase the educational achievement of participants' children. The immediate objectives were to:

--increase parent participants' English language skills through classroom instrution in E.S.L.;

--increase parent participants' academic attainment through classroom preparation for the high school equivalency diploma examination; and

--increase parent participants' involvement in their children's school-related activities.

The by-products of program activities were to include staff development, resource development, an awareness of program need, and program replication in other parts of the city.

PROGRAM STAFFING

Two teachers and three paraprofessionals instructed parents at the participating sites. In addition to their administrative duties, the central staff also provided direct services to parent participants. Staff turnover, however, was extensive during the program's three-year cycle: many staff members left the project for career advancement. Although this turnover did not critically affect project operations, it did result in the continous training of new personnel. The following table presents staff positions and their areas of responsibility.

TABLE 4

Title VII Program Staff: Main Responsibilities and Scheduling

Program Director (1) Directed all program activities: supervised all personnel. Planned staff training and development. Developed evaluation strategy. Maintained liaison with superintendents, supervisors, principals, city agencies, etc.	At central site: 3 days In field: 2 days
Resource Specialist/Asst. Director (1) Coordinated implementation of program activities. Assisted in staff hiring, training, and development. Conducted workshops for parents. Acquired and reviewed materials for resource center. Was responsible for budget implementation and accounting.	At central site: 2 days In field: 3 days
Resource Teachers (2) Selected and obtained appropriate instructional materials. Developed additional materials and testing instruments as needed. Provided classroom instruction for participants and evaluated their progress. Planned and participated in trips and other special activities.	At central site: 1 day In field: 4 days (2 days at each site)
Paraprofessionals (3) Two were assigned to the districts where they assisted the teachers: corrected homework, worked with parent participants on an individual basis, took attendance, participated in trips and special activities. One was a neighborhood worker assigned to work with Haitian parents.	At central site: 1 day In field: 4 days (2 days at each site)
Bilingual Secretary (1) Performed secretarial and clerical functions including the production of materials, correspondence, timesheets processing, telephone, etc.	At central site: 5 days

PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

The project experienced many delays in implementation. The late receipt of funding, problems in identifying appropriate staff at the funded salary levels, and the late release of teachers by the central Board of Education initially hindered its full functioning. In addition, space allocation problems arose at the district level. Once these problems were resolved, staff members introduced the program to appropriate school district personnel.

Parent recruitment was done by mail and by sending information home with students. All communications were bilingual. At registration, demographic and educational information was collected. Classes began five months after funding was received, in April, 1981. Appendix A presents an overview of program implementation during the three funding years.

Several changes in the program's design occurred during this five month start-up period. Because of logistics problems within certain districts, the number of program sites was reduced. The project's focus was narrowed to target parents of LEP students in kindergarten through grade three. Enrollment goals were left open to reflect the changing commitment of participants. And, realizing a city-wide approach was inappropriate, a site-based approach was adopted. However, the overall objective of the project remained constant.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM

Project Parent's instructional program consisted of three components: education, awareness, and involvement.

Education Component

The education component aimed to increase the ability of participating parents to speak, read, and write in English, and to prepare participants to take the high school equivalency test. The project pursued these objectives through classroom instruction in English as a second language and high school preparation classes. Classes were held twice a week at each site. Since there was a higher demand for E.S.L. classes and a preference for mornings, E.S.L. was taught in the morning and G.E.D. was scheduled for the afternoon.

E.S.L. classes did not follow a standard curriculum and were not geared to normed tests. Each participant was assessed by diagnostic tests which determined the level of language skills. Instruction stressed writing, as well as speaking and reading, in English. This was especially important for younger parents who had fairly good oral language skills but had difficulty writing in either English or in their native languages. Within the classroom, instruction was individualized as much as possible. The paraprofessionals handled small groups within the classroom and worked with students on a one-to-one basis. Participants were encouraged to speak only English in the E.S.L. class. When they used the native language, the teacher helped them find equivalents in English to express themselves.

Mathematics and English language content areas were taught in integrated fashion with the organizing focus always being parents' participation in their children's education and development. Mathematics homework included a duplicate copy for the children's use, for example;

while the writing assignment might be to compose a note to a child's teacher. An observed E.S.L. class used an urban survival skills approach. The family presented in the materials had to make a decision about buying new furniture; thus mathematics skills were integrated with the lesson. The class also included a discussion of the pros and cons of credit buying.

G.E.D. classes were structured around the material in Preparacion Para el Examen de Equivalencia de la Escuela Superior (Arco), and stressed the language and mathematics components. Students worked alone or in small groups according to their level of progress. Again, as in the E.S.L. classes, instruction was individualized as much as possible.

In the third program year, 13 participants from P.S. 14 (C.S.D. 24) and six from P.S. 140 (C.S.D. 1) took the G.E.D. test. During the previous year, 13 participants at P.S. 188 (C.S.D. 1) took the test and 11 passed. In evaluation discussions, the P.S. 14 participants generally found the G.E.D easier than expected and thought that the math section was easier than the language section. The P.S. 140 participants thought, in general, that the test was difficult, particularly the math section. The fact that the program had functioned without interruption at P.S. 14 since the first year of the program, while the P.S. 40 participants began the program in its last year might account for these reactions. Participants were encouraged to retake the test until they passed. They expressed their willingness to do so. A schedule for a typical week in the instructional program is presented in Table 5.

TABLE 5

A Weekly Schedule

Dist.	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	PS 188	PS 140	PS 188	PS 140	Central Site
	A.M. ESL Instruction	A.M. ESL Instruction	A.M. ESL Instruction	A.M. Monthly workshop conducted by Asst. Director	<u>Clerical</u> -Prepare wkly reports -Plan next week's work -Prepare curriculum materials
	P.M. GED Instruction Math	P.M. GED Instruction Math	P.M. GED Instruction Am. History	P.M. GED Instruction Am. History	
24	PS 14	PS 143	PS 14	PS 143	
	A.M. ESL Instruction	A.M. Monthly workshop by Asst. Dir.	A.M. ESL Instruction	A.M. ESL Instruction	<u>Programmatic</u> - Staff planning for upcoming meeting of citywide advisory committee on Bil. Ed.
	P.M. GED Instruction Math	P.M. GED Instruction Math	P.M. GED Instruction Am. History	P.M. GED Instruction Am. History	
Central Site	Handout translation Prepare workshop materials	Plan Advisory Com. meeting Substitute for absent teacher	Visit satellite school in D. 1 Plan educational trip	Parent Education Task Force Planning staff	- Training Session New ESL materials -Demo

Awareness Component

The awareness component objectives included:

--To increase participants' knowledge of different aspects of the educational system;

--To assist participants in understanding how those aspects affect their children's education; and

--To develop the technical know-how to deal with those aspects so as to benefit their children.

These objectives were pursued through a monthly workshop program. The one or two workshops conducted each month complemented the classroom experience and focused on particular parent participation issues. Parents were encouraged to suggest topics for workshops. Some suggested topics were: following your child's progress in school; understanding students' records; results of city-wide testing; what is bilingual education?; bilingual education for special students; how to evaluate the local school; the structure of a school district; and the ways of participating in children's educational process.

A workshop on parents' communication with their children was observed. It addressed participants' needs on several levels. When the subject discussed was communication about the body, it became evident that some of the women in the group had only the most rudimentary knowledge and many had never discussed the topic in a public situation. The lesson provided new vocabulary words, specific knowledge about cross cultural differences in social behavior relative to the topic, information about how to apply this knowledge to improve communication between parents and the schools, and enhanced self-knowledge and self-respect.

The workshops were conducted by the project director and the assisiant director. Having personnel other than the classroom teachers emphasized the workshops as a separate program component. The workshop leaders made bilingual presentations with written materials. The discussion that followed was both in English and the native language of the audience. Each workshop participant was given printed agenda; even the need for an agenda became a subject for discussion. At the end of each workshop, participants completed an evaluation form rating the session on clarity, organization, usefulness of information, presentation, and achievement of stated objectives. They also offered suggestions. Participating parents had the choice of attending classes only or workshops only, but no one took that option. Even parents who passed the G.E.D. continued to participate in the workshops. Table 6 presents the number and percent of parents attending the workshops and the number of sessions attended.

TABLE 6

Number and Percent of Parents Attending Workshops

Number of Workshops Attended	Number of Parents	Percent
0	18	15
1	17	14
2	13	11
3	15	13
4	20	17
5	10	8
6	18	15
7	8	7
8	1	less than 1
TOTAL	120	100

Involvement Component

The involvement component attempted to provide specific opportunities for meaningful involvement and to guide participants, through analysis of real participatory experiences, to understand the relationship between parental involvement and children's achievement in school.

The project pursued these objectives through a series of planned participatory experiences in which parents assumed a variety of roles. Project participants became concerned parents when they approached teachers and school principals to discuss their children's scores on standardized tests. They also became educators then they went on project-sponsored trips with their children (to local libraries, the floating hospital, and Sesame Place). Twenty-seven parents reported accompanying their child on at least one project trip; 17 parents went on two trips; and three parents went on all three project-sponsored outings.

Parents also became school partners when they won seats on Parent Teacher Associations. (Eighty-one parents reported belonging to at least one parent organization; four were members of two groups.) They became community activists when they took themselves and their neighbors to vote in the 1983 school board elections. They became advisors when they joined the Central Board Advisory Committee on Bilingual Education where they articulated local needs. They became advocates for bilingual education when they joined other parents in petitioning the New York City schools chancellor for adequate levels of bilingual instruction. They became representatives when they travelled to district, city, state, and even national conferences of bilingual parents and educators. (Twenty-three

parents reported attending at least one such conference; three parents attended two.) They became sharers of experience and information when they joined others in a city-wide Parents' Network (now housed outside the school system at the Hispanic Women's Center in New York). And, they became their children's allies when they finally began to ask critical questions about the education of their children.

MATERIALS ACQUISITION AND DEVELOPMENT

Commercial Materials

The project staff spent considerable time during the project's first year acquiring, evaluating, and selecting materials for the target population. The staff considered it important that materials be current and relevent to the urban experience, preferring materials that reflected the socio-economic range and environment of the community in which they were to be used. Thus the texts of No Hot Water Tonight and No Cold Water Either were selected for schools on the Lower East Side of Manhattan (an inner-city area), but were not used in Queens. Another text, Repaso Matematico, had an attractive side-by-side English and Spanish format. Materials used included the following:

--The English Notebook, Exercises for Mastering the Essential Structures by Richard Yorkey;

--Asi Escribimos and Ya Escribimos by Alice Arlene Mohrman;

--Everyday English (Books 1 and 2) by D. Krulik and B. Zaffren;

--Preparacion Para el Examen de Equivalencia de Escuela Superior (Arco);

--Structured Tasks for Adult Readers, Books 1 and 2, by Maxine Sheaber and Arthur Newman;

--No Hot Water Tonight and No Cold Water Either by Jean Bodman and Michael Lanzano;

--Repaso Matematico Bilingue by Edwin I. Stein;

--CAT, Practice Booklets in ESL by Random House;

--People at Work, Visual aids produced in cooperation with Women's Action Alliance, Instructo Corporation.

Appropriate exercises from several other sources were also used in the classroom.

Resource Centers Materials

The project also selected relevant literature from a variety of resource centers. Some examples are:

ABC Para los Padres/ABC's for Parents by United Parents Association of New York City, Inc. (handbook including school district maps and glossary);

Lists of local school board members;

Copy of Pupil Cumulative Record form used by the New York City Board of Education;

Information about Hostos College (the City University college for bilinguals);

Teaching Ideas for Parents to Use with their Children/ Ideas que los Padres Pueden Usar para Ensenarles a sus Hijos by Dr. Steve Moreno;

Desarrollo Infantil--Los Padres Como Primeros Maestros (from O.B.E. Native Language Reading Approach Program);

Recetas Para la Lectura en el Hogar (from the Native Language Approach Program also funded by Title VII);

Information on Title VII Bilingual Education Act, Title VII definition of Bilingual Education, and bilingual program models in the United States;

Information on the Federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act;

News for Bilingual Parents, a newsletter distributed by Impact Institutes Project P.I.E. (Parent Involvement in Evaluation);

¿Qué es lo que Aprenden Nuestros Niños en la Escuela?, Ed. Magali Carmenaty (distributed by the Regional Bilingual Training Resource Center based at the New York City Board of Education);

Information about the Bilingual Education Service Center;

Manual de los Padres: Los Padres También Pueden ser Maestros (Parents Can Be Tutors), distributed by the Center for Latino Education, Florida International University.

Project-Produced Materials

Although classroom instructional needs were sufficiently met by commercial materials, some materials had to be translated for the smaller language groups for which commercial items were scarce. Most translations were into Greek. The project staff adapted diagnostic exams and produced short simple versions for use in language skills (English and Spanish) and mathematics.

Most of the program-developed materials were for use in the awareness workshop program. Since the curriculum grew to reflect participants' interests, the production of materials was ongoing.

In general, the package for each workshop included an agenda sheet, an evaluation form, and topic materials. Each workshop required a special handout for the topic in English and the native language. Special presentations required additional preparation. For example, the first workshop for a new group of parents included a slide presentation on the philosophy of the program. When guests were invited (speaker from H.A.C.E.R. on the conduct of school board elections, speaker from La Guardia Community College on how to apply for college admission) materials were prepared to go with the guests' presentations. Some of the workshops were taped and used later in the year as needed.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The main objective of the staff development component was to produce a cadre of bilingual personnel competent in the planning, management, and implementation of parent education and involvement programs. In implementing the program, the staff acquired skills in demonstrating the value of the program to school districts, in organizing parent groups, in planning workshops and participatory activities, and in conducting adult education. They also learned techniques to motivate and sustain parent participation in program activities. The staff discussed their experiences in ongoing professional sessions at the central site. They also discussed emerging problems and developed countering strategies.

Staff development was also encouraged through a variety of professional activities and continuing education. These included:

Workshops-	New York State Parent Workshop New York Public Library Workshop B.E.S.C. E.S.L. Workshop District 4 Conference Workshop
Meetings-	Weekly Parent-Staff meetings P.A.C. meetings O.B.E. staff meetings
Conferences-	S.A.B.E. conference N.A.B.E. conference U.P.A. conference Hispanic Parents conference on education Mini-conferences for Greek, Haitian, and Chinese parents
Degree Programs-	Hofstra B.A. program in bilingual education (one paraprofessional left program during first year to fulfill degree requirements)
	Brooklyn College B.A. program (one paraprofessional is 12 credits short of degree)
	Fordham University M.A. program (one resource teacher completing requirements)

City College M.A. program) one resource teacher completing requirements for specialty in Bilingual Community Education)

Program in Special Education (project director and assistant director completed the six credit program requirements to qualify for a New York City license in Special Education)

In the summer of 1981, Project Parents and the Fordham University Graduate School of Education sponsored an institute on "Strategies for Teaching Adults," focusing on cognitive development in the adult life span. Another emphasis was the relation of adult cognitive levels to complementary teaching/instructional methods, specifically those effective in training and academic workshops, in providing technical assistance to individuals and small groups of parents, and in conducting informal information sessions. The institute used selections from the works of Malcolm Knowles, Cyril Houle, and Paolo Freire as part of its curriculum.

In the summer of 1982, three staff members participated in an intensive reading institute at Fordham. The two-week, all-day program provided the equivalent of a semester's work.

Professional growth was also evident in the changes made by staff members during the project duration's. One of the original resource teachers completed graduate study in adult education and was hired as coordinator of parent programs in a New York City school district. A school-neighborhood worker, who served as liaison to the Haitian parents in the program, was hired by a community agency as director of Haitian Parents' Programs. Two of the original paraprofessionals obtained New York City teaching licenses. One took a teaching position at P.S. 14 (District 24), one of the project schools. The other replaced the

project resource teacher mentioned above who had left to direct parent programs in another district. Another paraprofessional, currently finishing a B.A. degree, now intends to include adult education courses on her schedule. Finally, the project director was chosen as school principal in a New York City district. Skills in parent involvement, particularly with parents of limited English proficiency, figured heavily in the selection criteria.

AFFECTIVE DOMAIN

A main source of satisfaction for project staff came from witnessing an increase in parental awareness and participation in school-related activities. At P.S. 188 (C.S.D. 1) for example, project participants were very passive during the program's first year. As one staff member stated, "Nobody said anything for a whole year." In the second year, participating parents were in the principal's office asking (successfully) for a release of reading score records. They then organized a slate to run for the Parent-Teacher Association. In the third year, parents from Project Parents held all elected positions in the P.T.A.

At P.S. 14 in District 24, parent participation had been high. However, parents with limited English language skills had not participated fully and in many cases, had not participated at all. In the third project year, two project parents were part of the ten-member Parents Association board. The school principal saw the program as a positive means of involving more Hispanic parents in the life of the school. He said the project had brought in people whom otherwise "you would never see."

Particularly important was the fact that parents began to ask critical questions with positive results. One parent's inquiry led to her child's placement in a special reading program. In another case, parents decided that a school staff member was not an adequate translator for parent meetings and recruited their own translator. The overall outcome of the program was that participants became involved in problem solving rather than assuming that there was little that they could do to change unwanted conditions.

In observed evaluation sessions, participants were quick to express their feelings about the program. In general, they wanted to see it continue and expand. They felt the program was supportive in developing the kind of self-confidence that helped make dealing with new situations easier than expected. Many commented on their new feelings of self-sufficiency, and of new experiences and possibilities opening up to them. There was also a special sense of pride when participants spoke about their new found ability to help their children. Appendix B contains some of the comments made by program participants.

Forty-nine parents submitted final evaluation questionnaires listing aspects of the program which they found helpful. Learning English and increasing the ability to help their children headed the long list. By the end of the school year, 73 parents had left the program: 2 entered a vocational or college program; 2 moved to another area; 3 left the United States; 16 obtained employment; 20 left due to illness or personal reasons; and 30 left for "other" reasons.

Children of parents in the program were among those singled out by the schools to receive end-of-year awards. The following were given for

the 1982-83 year:

P.S. 140: reading outstanding achievement (1), mathematics trophy (1), mathematics certificates (5), notebook certificate (1), story telling district winner (1), attendance (1), service certificate (1), and certificate of merit (1).

P.S. 188: music talent award (1), honor roll pin for Spanish (1), reading certificate (2), and medal (1).

P.S. 14: reading award (4), attendance (1), gymnastics trophy (1), art certificate (2).

PROGRAM IMPACT

P.S. 14 (C.S.D. 24) serves its Hispanic LEP population through Aspira classes. There is a class at each grade level from kindergarten to grade five. Children of Greek descent study their native language and culture at the neighborhood Greek school after regular school hours. There is also an after-school Italian culture class at P.S. 14. As a result of Project Parents activities, the principal added Italian culture and language classes for Italian children to the regular school program on a three-times-a-week basis.

The principal at P.S. 140 (C.S.D. 1) stated that he was proud of the program and always showed it off to visitors. Parents, in turn, felt supported by and very supportive of the principal. The school administration and program parents became good press for each other.

According to a C.S.D. 1 representative, Project Parents was readily accepted because there was need for just such a program. The district was pleased with the results, stating that at the very least, communication between school and parents improved. School personnel appreciated having parents more available and reported an increase in parent volunteers in the school. Project participants assumed leadership roles using the

information learned in Project Parents to help other parents in the school. The district is also convinced that program parents' participation in the voting process was a factor in the parent slate victory in the 1983 local school board elections.

The district decided to adopt and expand the program on its own during the third year of project operation. They secured a ten thousand dollar private foundation grant and hired a teacher and paraprofessional in the second term of the 1982-83 year. Project Parents undertook the training of the C.S.D. 1 staff and supplied classroom materials and workshop sequence. The staff worked in two schools (P.S. 97 and P.S. 61). The district is committed to maintaining the same level of services in 1983-84 with tax-levy funds. A school board member reported that at the last board meeting for the year, a project participant from P.S. 61 proposed that the program there be expanded to five times a week. The district is looking into the possibilities of program expansion in the coming year.

IV. FINDINGS: PARENT AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

ASSESSMENT PROCEDURES AND INSTRUMENTS

The following section presents the assessment procedures and instruments used in evaluating the attainment of program objectives. Although these objectives were not stated in measurable terms, their aim was to propose significant gains in English and native language development, and in English reading and mathematics. In addition, the proposed evaluation instruments were not administered by program staff. Instead, the project provided data on student performance on examinations used in the city-wide testing program.

The following are the areas assessed and the instruments used:

Student English language development -- Language Assessment Battery (LAB) English, Levels 1 and 2;

Student native language development -- Language Assessment Battery (LAB) - Spanish, Levels 1 and 2;

Student reading achievement -- California Achievement Test (CAT), Levels 12 to 14;

Student mathematics achievement -- Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test (S.D.M.T.), Levels 2, 3, and 4;

Parent achievement -- New York State General Education Diploma Examination.

Program students were tested once each academic year, and a pre/post correlated *t*-test was computed using students' scores from the previous year as the pre-test, and their most recent scores as the post-test. This statistical analysis demonstrates whether the difference between pre- and post-test mean scores (gain) is significantly greater than would be expected from chance variation alone. However, this analysis does not

represent an estimate of how students would have performed in the absence of the program.

The "effect size" (E.S.)*, which expresses the mean gain divided by the standard deviation of the gains, was also computed. Unlike the t-test, the E.S. is not affected by sample size. It became desirable to establish such an estimate because substantial differences frequently fail to reach statistical significance if the sample size is small. Conversely, small differences can be statistically significant if the sample size is large. The E.S. indicates whether there is a meaningful change. If the E.S. is below 0.2, the standard deviation of the gains is at least five times greater than the mean gain. This implies that the mean gain may be due to the very large gains of a few students combined with small gains of many. In this case, the average gain of the group is not very meaningful. If the E.S. is 0.8 or greater, the mean gain and the standard deviation of the gains are about equal, indicating that most students have made similar gains. In this case, the gain is meaningful.

Of the instruments used, the California Achievement Test and the Stanford Diagnostic Math Test are described and critiqued in Buros' Mental Measurement Yearbooks. The Language Assessment Battery is a series of tests developed by the New York City Public Schools to identify students of limited English proficiency (LEP). The items for the English subtests were selected to provide sufficient "floor" for

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*Jacob Cohen. Statistical Power Analysis for the Behavioral Sciences (Revised Edition). New York: Academic Press, 1977 Chapter 2.

LEP students. The tests were normed on the New York City Public Schools' population and are divided into four levels:

	Grades
Level 1	K-2
Level 2	3-5
Level 3	6-8
Level 4	9-12

The Spanish LAB has items similar to those on the English LAB and is divided into the same four levels. The attempt was to make tests which are equivalent across languages. The Spanish LAB was normed on Hispanic surnamed students in New York City Public Schools. More information on psychometric properties may be obtained from the New York City Public Schools, Office of Testing, 131 Livingston Street, Brooklyn, New York 11201.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT

Pre- and post-test data for the Language Assessment Battery were available for only 38 of the 166 students participating in the program. These data are presented in Table 7 by subtest.

As can be seen, the average raw score gain of 7.8 points on the listening/speaking subtest was statistically significant and of very large effect size (1.38). The average raw score gain of nine points on the reading/writing subtests (administered to students in grade two and above) was also significant and of very large effect size (1.74). However, the correlation was low, indicating that the gains were uneven. This might be due to the low reading ability of all students at the end of the first grade.

Table 7 also presents the means and standard deviations of ten students (grades two through four) who were pre-tested on level 1 and post-tested on level 2. As only raw score information was provided for these students, no analysis could be performed due to the differences in test levels.

TABLE 7

English Language Achievement

Significance of Mean Total Raw Score Differences Between Initial and Final Test Scores of Students with Full Instructional Treatment on the Language Assessment Battery, Level 1, by Subtest

Subtest	N	Pre-Test Mean	Pre-Test Standard Deviation	Post-Test Mean	Post-Test Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	Corr. Pre/post	T-test	Level of Significance	Effect Size
Listening/ Speaking (Grades K-2)	28	13.1	7.9	20.9	5.9	7.8	.70	7.25	.01	1.38
Reading/ Writing (Grade 2)	5	13.6	3.3	22.6	4.6	9.0	.17	3.91	.02	1.74

	N	Pre-Test Level 1 Mean	Pre-Test Level 1 Standard Deviation	Post-Test Level 2 Mean	Post-Test Level 2 Standard Deviation
Listening/ Speaking (Grades 2-4)	10	19.0	7.8	23.1	7.5
Reading/ Writing (Grade 2-4)	10	12.4	5.1	23.1	7.5
TOTAL	10	40.6	8.1	55.2	12.0

NATIVE LANGUAGE ACHIEVEMENT

Pre- and post-test data were available for only 20 students tested with the Spanish LAB. As can be seen in Table 8, there was no significant change in listening and speaking scores due to high pre-test scores (ceiling effects) and regression to the mean. However, the reading/writing raw scores in the native language had a statistically significant increase of 3.5 points which had a very large effect size of 1.82.

Table 8 also presents the means and standard deviations of eight students who were pre- and post-tested with different levels of the Spanish LAB.

TABLE 8

Native Language Achievement

Significance of Mean Total Raw Score Differences Between Initial and Final Test Scores of Students with Full Instructional Treatment on the Language Assessment Battery, Spanish Level 1, by Subtest

Subtest	N	Pre-Test Mean	Pre-Test Standard Deviation	Post-Test Mean	Post-Test Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	Corr. Pre/post	T-test	Level of Significance	Effect Size
Listening/ Speaking (Grades K-2)	12	26.0	4.7	25.8	5.4	-0.2	.76	-.24	ns	-.06
Reading/ Writing (Grade 2)	4	17.3	6.1	20.8	4.9	3.5	.96	3.66	.05	1.82

	N	Pre-Test Level 1 Mean	Pre-Test Level 1 Standard Deviation	Post-Test Level 2 Mean	Post-Test Level 2 Standard Deviation
Listening/ Speaking (Grades 3,4)	8	22.1	6.8	25.3	10.5
Reading/ Writing (Grades 3,4)	8	13.4	4.7	25.3	10.5
TOTAL	8	49.9	12.5	65.6	18.3

ENGLISH READING AND MATHEMATICS

Since program students were pre- and post-tested with different levels of the California Achievement Test (CAT) and the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematic Test (S.D.M.T.) N.C.E.s* were used to determine student achievement rather than using raw scores. Results are available for third- and fourth-grade students only since these examinations are first administered to students in grade two.

Fourth-grade students made large significant gains on the CAT (see Table 9). Students in grade three made moderate non-significant gains, despite the fact that fourth graders had a higher N.C.E. pre-test score.

Third graders made large significant gains on the S.D.M.T. (see Table 10), while fourth-grade students did not make any gains. The reason no gain was made in grade four is understandable, as their pre-test scores were at the national mean (N.C.E. = 49.7) and staying close to that score at post-test means that they gained one grade level in one year. However, the large gain for the third graders put them above the national mean, demonstrating that the achievement in third grade math was exceptional.

PARENT PERFORMANCE

Enrollment data for General Equivalency Diploma classes were reported for 98 of the 145 parents participating in the program. Nineteen of the 28 parents who took the G.E.D. examination passed.

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*Normal Curve Equivalents (N.C.E.s) are equal interval normalized standard scores with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 21. Expressing scores in terms of N.C.E.s allows for comparison to the norming population when a norm referenced test is used. N.C.E.s have the same mean and range as percentiles, but unlike percentiles they are equal interval and therefore can be manipulated for analysis purposes.

TABLE 9

English Reading Achievement

Significance of Mean Total N.C.E. Score Differences Between Initial and Final Test Scores of Students with Full Instructional Treatment on the California Achievement Test, by Grade

		Pre-Test		Post-Test						
Grade	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	Corr. Pre/post	T-test	Level of Significance	Effect Size
3	7	28.9	22.0	32.7	16.7	4.8	.84	1.06	ns	.40
4	10	31.4	18.4	45.4	12.6	14.0	.57	2.91	.02	.92

TABLE 10

Mathematics Achievement

Significance of Mean Total N.C.E. Score Differences Between Initial and Final Test Scores of Students with Full Instructional Treatment on the Stanford Diagnostic Mathematics Test, by Grade

		Pre-Test		Post-Test						
Grade	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Difference	Corr. Pre/post	T-test	Level of Significance	Effect Size
3	7	42.0	17.1	60.6	9.5	18.6	.33	2.95	.03	1.00
4	9	49.7	13.8	46.9	14.9	-2.8	.71	-0.76	ns	.26

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

The overall goal of Project Parents was to enhance the educational achievement of students of limited proficiency in English by meaningfully engaging their parents in the educational process. This concept was embraced without question by participating educators and administrators. All agreed that a genuine need existed for a systematic program involving parents of LEP students in school-related activities in meaningful ways and that the need was not being met.

The project identified barriers that non-English-speaking immigrants traditionally faced in dealing with schools: "I don't know English," "I don't have an education." The project then formulated specific objectives geared to erase those barriers by upgrading both the English language and academic skills of participants. Morning E.S.L. classes and afternoon G.E.D. classes were organized.

The project used the parents' common interest, that of helping their children succeed, as motivation for the awareness workshop component. Once or twice a month the project director and assistant director conducted sessions with parents at each site which had direct bearing on the achievement of children in school. As the program progressed, parents became increasingly aware of many factors that affect schooling, and began to suggest additional topics for discussion. Participants evaluated each session and in general, evaluations indicated satisfaction with the program.

The project used parents' new awareness level to promote a variety of participatory experiences which were highly successful. Parents participated in school-based, district-wide, city-wide, state-wide, and national activities with a great deal of enthusiasm. By self-report, they were more confident and more knowledgeable than when they entered the program. Results can also be seen in the number of parents participating in such activities as the executive committees of P.T.A.s and the Central Board's Advisory Committee on Bilingual Education.

After completing the program, parents talked about feeling more at ease using English in and out of school situations. Most of the parents who took the high school equivalency examination passed the test. Those who did not pass expressed a willingness to try again.

An additional objective of Project Parents was to develop a basic parent training model that could be easily replicated in other settings. To achieve this, the project planned to establish parent education programs in each of four school districts presenting a variety of characteristics (socio-economic, native language, degrees of participation, etc.). The project was not successful in providing services to all the desired sites within the prescribed time. However, the two participating districts were varied enough to conclude that the program would function in an inner-city setting as well as in a working class neighborhood setting. Although most participants were female, the program met the needs of the men who participated. It appealed to different language groups, although the program lost some participants who felt uncomfortable being "a minority within a minority." In addition, it worked regardless of changes in personnel.

Adequate program space and active support by the school administration were essential for success; additionally, a special quality of idealism and dedication, besides professional competence was also required. The project's former resource teacher who became coordinator of parent programs in another school district began to adapt the Project Parents model. She used the project's classroom materials and the workshop scope sequence. Her district made tax-levy and Module 5 funds available for the program. The project staff member who became director of Haitian parent programs also began to adapt the Project Parents model, but in an out-of-school situation. C.S.D. 1 is conducting its own replication experiment without Title VII funds.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the three-year experience of Project Parents, the following recommendations are aimed at improving the overall effectiveness of future programs serving similar populations:

Site Selection

Formal criteria should be developed in selecting sites for parent education programs. One important criterion is the availability of adequate space. Strategies should also be developed to involve school administrators, classroom personnel, and others in the program to integrate the program more fully with the site's existing structure. The more the program is considered an integral part of the school, the better its chances for success.

Program Objectives and Evaluation Design

Program objectives should be clearly stated considering the indicators that can be used to assess the extent to which the objectives have been met. In dealing with cause and effect objectives, long-term effects and short-term results should be specified. For example:

Long Term - Parent involvement will lead to greater student achievement.

Short Term - Parents will increase the amount of time they spend reading with their children.

Target Population

Since the emphasis of this type of program is ultimately to improve academic performance of students, special efforts should be made to select the parents of those children in greatest need as program participants. The aid of counselors and community agencies should be enlisted to make more school parents aware of the program's availability, particularly the parents of children "at risk."

Program Implementation

Pre-program activities should include completing curriculum which might include: pre-test; skills development sequence; list of textbooks; resource materials; and post-test. All are available from commercial sources for both E.S.L. and G.E.D. The program might consider developing a step-by-step manual to be used in the awareness and participation component which could include techniques for such processes as:

--eliciting groups' points of common interest;

--fostering self expression; and

--bringing together groups from varying ethnic backgrounds.

In order to maximize each activity's potential for linking parents' involvement to children's achievement, activities might directly address the main objectives. Sessions might be arranged for example, between parents and children's teachers on the mathematics skills to be covered that semester.

The extensive use of media, especially tape recorders, might be particularly useful. All workshops should be taped so that participants who were unable to attend, or other family members, could listen to the tapes on another occasion. Tapes could also be used for practice with conversation and pronunciation.

Program Documentation

Complete and timely records of all data to be collected should be maintained. The program might also consider holding periodic evaluation sessions for all staff.

VI. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IMPLEMENTATION SCHEDULE

Funding Year	Date	Landmark
1	November 1980	Funding notification, administrative staff hired.
1	February 1981	Teachers released by Board of Education; paraprofessional for C.S.D. 1 hired.
1	April 1981	Classes begin at P.S. 188 and P.S. 142 (C.S.D. 1).
1	May 1981	Classes begin at P.S. 14 in C.S.D. 24.
2	September 1981	Paraprofessional for C.S.D. 24 hired.
	January 1982	Classes begin at P.S. 143 (C.S.D. 24). Paraprofessional in C.S.D. 24 leaves program to finish B.A. studies.
2	June 1982	Replacement paraprofessional for C.S.D. 24 hired. Resource teacher in C.S.D. 1 leaves program for position in another school district.
3	September 1982	Program displaced at P.S. 143 (C.S.D. 24). Former paraprofessional in C.S.D. 1 obtains teaching license, becomes resource teacher for C.S.D. 1.
	October 1982	Program at P.S. 142 (C.S.D. 1) moves to P.S. 140.
	January 1983	School neighborhood worker in C.S.D. 24 leaves program for position as director of a Haitian Parents program. C.S.D. 1 hires staff with non-Title VII funds to expand Project Parents program to two additional schools. Project Parents begins training district staff.

February 1983	Replacement paraprofessional for C.S.D. 24 hired. Program at P.S. 143 (C.S.D. 24) closes down; staff reassigned to P.S. 140 (C.S.D. 1).
May 1983	Project director leaves program to become principal of a New York City public elementary school. Assistant director assumes program direction.
August 1983	Program ends.

APPENDIX B

Parents' Reactions to Program*

"I can now go to the hospital on my own and let them know what I feel; I can fill out the forms."

"I have a part-time job this year...Being here gave me self-confidence. I still don't speak English, but I understand enough to get along with my boss and do the work."

"I had never voted. I learned about it and did it through the program."

"I got a sense of community with other parents."

"My son call me from Arizona on Mother's Day. - Hello, Mom. - Hello, son. How are you? - Is this my mother? (in proud voice) This was the first time he heard me speak English."

"I'm especially happy because my daughter in the tenth grade asks me for help -- and I can help her."

"The main thing is that, because I know English now, I don't have to depend on my husband to read to the children. I can do it myself."

"I had a guilt problem in admitting that my child needed special education. The information from the workshop helped me understand the problem and my options."

"I leave for school together with my children. When they say, 'I don't feel like going to school,' I say, Neither do I, but we have to go learn."

"My son just started school; he is beginning to speak English. I find what I'm learning helpful in communicating with him."

"My English has improved a lot. I help my child and he helps me with my homework."

"I always had the fear that maybe I wouldn't be able to understand the speeches in English, but I was very happy to find that I understood almost everything, and it made me very proud to think of myself as bilingual."

"I don't speak English very well. What I know I owe to Project Parents, and with what I am learning I involve myself...because this way I know what goes on. I have learned more about my rights as a parent. And I believe that my children benefit also, seeing me (do this) want to imitate me...Now almost all the (words) they ask me I tell them well and they say to one another: Mom understands."

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*The staff recorded all participant comments on cassettes and transcribed all notes. Translations were made where necessary. All records are available in project files.